

Dave Crooks

State Representative

District 63

How To Reach
Representative

Dave Crooks

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**ANSWER THE
QUESTIONNAIRE ONLINE**

www.state.in.us/R63

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Fall, 1999

Dear Friends,

The holiday season is quickly approaching, and the General Assembly will reconvene soon for the 2000 legislative session. As we go into this year's session, I would like to know what issues you feel are important. Enclosed in this newsletter you will find my legislative questionnaire which covers some of the issues which may be addressed by the legislature.

Because the 2000 session is a "short" one, we will begin on January 10 and finish on or before March 15. We normally do not address budgetary or fiscal issues during the short session, as that important task is reserved for long sessions, which allow more time to evaluate the state's needs. This year, however, there may be a few exceptions to that rule, including a reevaluation of the property tax assessment.

If you have any questions or comments about the information in this survey, please do not hesitate to contact me. I always appreciate your input and look forward to hearing from you. Thanks again for your time.

Sincerely,



2000 Page Program

Serving as a page during the 2000 session allows any child age 13 or older the opportunity to gain a firsthand glimpse of how the legislative system works. Students will be excused from school on the day they are serving as a page and will spend the entire day at the Statehouse.

Interested students should send me their name, parent or guardian's name, address, phone number, school and two different dates when the student could come to the Statehouse between January 10 and February 29, 2000.

Please remember session is short and places fill up fast, so apply as soon as possible.

Our mission is to create an environment for Indiana's youth that is conducive to both fun and learning, and which will stimulate student interest in government and community involvement. To that end, we plan to educate students regarding legislative processes; to give students an opportunity to meet their community leaders; to encourage student involvement in the community; and to introduce students to other students around the state.

Reassessment -- *how will it affect you?*

Last December the State Supreme Court ruled that the property assessment guidelines used in the collection of property taxes were unconstitutional because different types of property were not treated equitably. The Court mandated the State Tax Board to develop new guidelines based on “objectively verifiable data.”

What this means is that up to this point property has not been assessed in a uniform and fair manner. The state must now come up with new methods to ensure that all property owners are being treated equally. As a consequence, some areas of the state will soon be facing increases in their property tax burden, which is what I intend to address during the next legislative session in Indianapolis.

Earlier this year, I supported a bill to delay the reassessment. This would have allowed the board time to work out a good program. This also would have given the legislature time to review the guidelines and ease the shift in the tax burden that has been created by the change. This bill was ultimately defeated by the Senate, however, and we are now looking for ways to delay the reassessment or help absorb some of the increases that homeowners like yourselves may have to pay. In any case, I want to assure you that I will do everything that I can protect homeowners from unfair and excessive increases in their property taxes.

I will do my best to keep you updated on any changes that are made in the coming months, but feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions that you would like to share.



Rep. Crooks discusses legislation with Gov. Frank O'Bannon.

Educating our children

Did you know that more than 20 percent of adults read at or below a fifth grade level – far below the level needed to earn a living wage? Forty-three percent of people with the lowest literacy skills live in poverty.

The Indiana General Assembly has attempted to help by appropriating \$3.9 million in funding for early intervention (K-3) reading programs. The General Assembly also provided \$6 million to replace old and worn school library books and materials.

If you know of anyone who would like to obtain a GED, needs reading help for their child, needs reading help for themselves, wants to learn English as a Second Language, wants to improve their employment options or who wants to go from welfare to work, contact the Literacy Helpline at 1-800-267-9029. The helpline is part of the Indiana Literacy Foundation.

The Indiana Literacy Foundation sponsors statewide programs to encourage people to read. Reach Out and Read (ROAR) is a pediatric literacy initiative to help infants and children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years discover the joys of reading. Developed by pediatricians at Boston Medical Center, ROAR recruits volunteers to conduct reading circles at health facilities. Doctors “prescribe” reading to their young patients, each of whom receives a brand new book after each visit.

How are we doing?

	Indiana	U.S.
High School Graduation Rate	87.9%	82%
College Attendance Rate	53.5%	41%
SAT Composite Score	981	1013

2000 Legislative Survey

Questions

1. Do you believe floor sessions of the Indiana House and Senate should be broadcast on the Internet for public consumption?
2. Should changes be made in state laws that would make Indiana riverboats more competitive with those in surrounding states?
3. What should be done about gambling in Indiana?
A. Expand it B. Reduce it C. Outlaw it
4. In recent years, Illinois and Ohio have deregulated electric service. Do you believe Indiana should follow suit?
5. Do you believe inducements like enterprise zones and tax abatements are an effective use of tax dollars to spur economic development?
6. Do you support passage of legislation that would allow people to have their names placed on a list that would prohibit telemarketers from calling them?
7. Should the Legislature delay the implementation of new property assessment guidelines created by the State Board of Tax Commissioners that will shift the property tax burden to homeowners when they take effect?
8. Who should pay the largest share of property taxes?
A. Agriculture B. Business C. Homeowners
9. Do you favor passage of legislation that increases penalties against people who commit crimes against someone solely because of racial or sexual orientation?
10. Indiana presently ranks 48th in the nation in the amount of benefits provided to workers injured while on the job. Should injured workers be compensated at higher rates?

Responses

	<i>Respondent 1</i>		<i>Respondent 2</i>	
1.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3.	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
8.	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Your Comments

Place
Stamp
Here

Rep. Dave Crooks
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Hoosier Healthwise for Children

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration operates the Hoosier Healthwise for Children health care program.

In 1998 the Indiana General Assembly enacted the Children's Health Insurance program to provide health coverage to all children below the age of 19 and pregnant women. Eligible participants live in families with an income of 150% or less of the current federal poverty guidelines.

Hoosier Healthwise offers coverage for primary and preventive care and mental health and substance abuse treatment. It also has benefits for children with special health care needs like asthma or diabetes. Providing benefits to meet the needs of children helps to keep them healthy and ready to learn in school.

Call 1-800-889-9949 and ask for an application to be mailed to you or check the website for more information: www.state.in.us/chip/hoosierh.html.

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